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**Transmitted via Email**

July 2, 2007

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 300-7-19

SUBJECT: LTP – CRP – CONTINUOUS SIGN-UP RE-ENROLLMENT PLANNING GUIDANCE

Purpose. To clarify NRCS policy and responsibilities for developing Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign-up re-enrollment conservation plans.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2007

Background.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) and NRCS are working with existing Continuous CRP program participants whose contracts expire on September 30, 2007, to determine their desire for re-enrolling acres currently under contract. During the week of June 25, 2007, FSA sent letters to all eligible participants notifying them of their opportunity for re-enrollment. Interested participants are to respond to FSA by August 1.

NRCS is responsible to work with all interested re-enrollment participants and develop a new conservation plan. Conservation plans for this activity need to be completed by September 15 for those contracts that expire this fiscal year.

Program Eligibility Guidance.

- All re-enrolled practices must meet the **current** CRP program eligibility criteria and requirements including:
  - ✓ revisions related to practice purpose,
  - ✓ revised allowable practice extent (maximum width limitations),
  - ✓ re-enrolled practices must meet the appropriate **current** NRCS practice standards, and
  - ✓ re-enrolled practices determined to NOT meet the current practice standard requirements will be offered cost share assistance to implement a fully successful practice.
- All practice eligibility determinations must be documented on the Minnesota CRP documentation worksheets.
- Participants with questions concerning changed program requirements that could result in re-enrolled practices being ineligible and/or having revised eligibility will be referred to FSA for information on program rules and appeal rights.

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### Planning Guidance.

All re-enrolled CRP plans will be developed through entry into ToolKit and follow procedures in the joint FSA/NRCS CRP note for CCRP activities.

All plans must include an updated environmental evaluation during the conservation planning process. Existing environmental information in the current plan can be used as a starting point and be updated as needed. Planning policy mandates that completion of the NRCS-CPA-052 form include an on-site review of existing conditions.

- Field staff will need to conduct **on-site** planning assistance for the re-enrolled practices. When on-site planning assistance is provided it will include a review or evaluation of the existing cover to determine that the existing cover meets **current** NRCS standards.
- ToolKit practice narratives will assign all re-enrolled CCRP practices to their current practice code, for example:
  - ✓ Acres originally enrolled as Practice CP-13 will be re-planned to CP-21 or CP-2; CP-13 is no longer an eligible practice.
  - ✓ Acres originally enrolled with Practice CP-5 will be re-planned and contracted as CP-5A.
- All re-enrolled CCRP practices will have a corresponding mid-contract management activity planned, unless waived by the FSA State Committee. Where appropriate, 15-year contracts will schedule two separate mid-contract management activities and each 10-year contract will schedule one activity. To achieve the mid-contract management requirements all re-enrolled grassland acres will Schedule Practice 647, Early Successional Habitat Management, and all re-enrolled tree plantings will Schedule Practice 666, Forest Stand Improvement. All mid-contract management information provided in the conservation plan should be flexible enough to allow participants to select from a set of appropriate options within the allowable time frame. In most cases these options and time frames are described in a job sheet. Presenting this information in a flexible format will minimize the need for future plan modifications if participants decide to select alternative activities or alter their implementation schedule.
- District Conservationists have the option to only develop hardcopies of the re-enrolled plan for the landowner and FSA. NRCS will have access to the FSA file copies when revisions become necessary.

### Toolkit Guidance.

Use all existing Toolkit data entry procedures for normal conservation planning, with the additions noted below:

- Enter the “new” plan approved date. This is the date the participant approves the re-enrolled plan.
- For **all** plans, enter both the appropriate practice standard code and a mid-contract management practice. Re-enrolled plans will enter the current 2007 date for the planned practices when it’s determined that the practice(s) have adequate existing cover and meet

the current practice standard. When cost share assistance is required to establish or re-establish the practice the “planned application date” will reflect the year the practice is scheduled to be established.

- Enter an appropriate practice for the required mid-contract management activities for all practices. Schedule each mid-contract management practice using the planned application date. Each plan must have at least one mid-contract practice scheduled with a future planned application date.

Additional Information.

- Enrollment or re-enrollment of CCRP practices does not affect N/HEL determinations. Refer to Minnesota Amendment 5 to the National Food Security Act Manual for more information.
- Included is additional planning and reporting guidance developed by Myron Taylor, State Program Specialist; direct questions on reporting CCRP to him. See the embedded PDF file.



CRP Project.pdf

Direct your questions on the CRP policy information in this bulletin to Paul Flynn, State Resource Conservationist at (651) 602-7870.

/s/

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State Conservationist

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